EXCISE

(36)

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EO 12065: NA
TAGS: SHUM, PORG, MMOL, SREF, PEPR, LA, UR
SUBJ: MORE REPORTS OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE IN LAOS
REF: A. BANGKOK 21894 (NOTAL)

B1A9

1. [redacted] NOTES OF INTERVIEWS WITH ALLEGED WITNESSES TO POISON GAS ATTACKS AGAINST HILLTRIBE VILLAGES IN LAOS OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS. IN MANY CASES, VILLAGERS WERE SAID TO HAVE TOLD LOCAL PATHET LAO OFFICIALS, AND IN ONE CASE (SEE PARA 6) CLAIMED TO HAVE MET WITH A SOVIET REPRESEN-

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B1A9

2. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS PROVIDE SUMMARY/HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORTS. COPIES [redacted] ARE BEING POUCHED TO EA/VLK.

3. INCIDENT-LATE JANUARY 1981. ATTACK ALLEGEDLY OCCURRED AT A VILLAGE OF 130 PEOPLE ON THE NORTH SLOPE OF MT. PHONCATERS (PHONETIC), APPROXIMATELY FOUR DAYS WALK NORTHWEST OF PAKSANE, LAOS. ATTACK WAS STAGED BY A FOUR ENG-INE PROP PLANE WHICH DROPPED YELLOW RICE-SIZED PELLETS. THERE WAS ONE DEATH IN THE POPULATION WHOSE SYMPTOMS INCLUDED DYSPEPSIA AND DARKENED SKIN. MANY VILLAGE ANIMALS DIED: FOWL DIED IN MINUTES, WHILE PIGS AND BUFFALO TOOK DAYS TO DIE. THE CHEMICAL KILLED RICE AND BURNED HOLES IN TREE LEAVES. THE VILLAGE CONTAINED FORMER VANG PAO SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

4. INCIDENT - MID-MARCH 1981. SOURCE CLAIMED A LARGE TWO ENGINE PROPELLER PLANE WITHOUT CAMOUFLAGE SPRAYED A MIST ON VILLAGE OF 60 HMONG (TF97/97), LOCATED BETWEEN MOUNT CHA AND PHA KHAO VILLAGES, WEST OF PHU BIA. ATTACK WAS ALLEGEDLY PART OF A SERIES OF OVER TEN ATTACKS DATING FROM NOVEMBER 1980. THIS ATTACK LEFT A MOIST, STICKY YELLOW SUBSTANCE ON THE GROUND, WHICH QUICKLY DRIED AND HAD SLIGHT ODOR OF SMOKE. TWO PEOPLE WHO ATE VEGETABLES TOUCHED BY THE SUBSTANCE DIED AFTER FIVE DAYS, WITH VIOLENT SYMPTOMS OF NAUSEA, VOMITING AND DIARRHEA. ALL OF THE

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VILLAGE'S PIGS AND MOST OF THE FOWL ALSO
DIED. NO PLANT DAMAGE OR SKIN REACTION WAS
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NOTED. SOURCE BROUGHT SAMPLE OF DRY, YELLOW
POWDER WHICH HE HAD SCRAPPED OFF ROCK (PRO-
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VIDED REF A).
5. INCIDENTS - AUGUST 18 AND 21, 1978. BOTH INCIDENTS TOOK PLACE AT SAN OUA (UF 92/14), IN A VALLEY SOUTHEAST OF PHU BIA. FIRST ATTACK INVOLVED 105 AND 85 ARTILLERY WHICH SHOT YELLOW AND GREEN SMOKE. NO DEATHS OCCURRED, BUT MANY HAD SYMPTOMS INCLUDING A DRUNK FEELING LASTING TWO HOURS AND DIARRHEA WITHOUT BLOOD. SECOND ATTACK WAS MADE BY L19 AIRCRAFT FIRING ROCKETS WHICH EXPLODED ABOVE GROUND, LEAVING YELLOW SMOKE WITH AN ODOR LIKE CAMPHOR. 146 OUT OF 164 DIED, MOSTLY WITHIN FIFTEEN MINUTES. SURVIVORS HAD SYMPTOMS OF HEMATEMESIS, HEMOPTYSIS, BLOODY
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DIARRHEA, RHINORRHEA AND CONJUNCTIVITIS.
6. INCIDENTS - SEPTEMBER 3 AND 18, 1980. SOURCE CLAIMED THAT SINGLE ENGINE GREY/WHITE BIPLANE SPRAYED MIST OVER FIELDS NEAR BAN OUDOM SAI VILLAGE (RA 68/08) ON BOTH OCCASIONS. THE FIRST TIME, RICE AND LEAVES DIED WITHIN THREE DAYS AND ABOUT 50 - 70 PER CENT OF CROP WAS LOST, BUT NO HUMANS OR ANIMALS WERE AFFECTED BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT IN THE FIELDS. THE SECOND INCIDENT LEFT YELLOW SPOTS ON THE GROUND, AND CAUSED BLOODY VOMITING AND DIARRHEA WITHIN FOUR HOURS FOR THE ONE PERSON IN THE FIELD, AS WELL AS DEATH OF ABOUT 100 CHICKENS WITHIN 24 HOURS AND 3 DOGS. AFTER THE ATTACK, VILLAGERS MET WITH GOVERNOR OF THE TOWN/AREA, AS WELL AS A SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE WHO SUGGESTED THAT THE AMERICANS WERE BEHIND THE ATTACKS AND SAID THAT THE USSR HAD NO MONEY FOR RICE RELIEF.
7. INCIDENTS - AUGUST 18 AND 29, 1980. SOURCE CLAIMED THAT A JET FIGHTER FLYING AT 9,000 FEET DROPPED ROCKETS WHICH EXPLODED AT 4,000 FEET. FIRST INCIDENT AFFECTED TWO VILLAGES IN SAME VALLEY, MOUANG OM AND TA LAC (US 99/18), COMBINED POPULATION ABOUT 500. THE ROCKET SPRAYED RED SMOKE WHICH TURNED INTO A YELLOW, DRY, FLAKY POWDER AFTER TWO HOURS ON THE GROUND AND WHICH CAUSED NO HUMAN DEATHS. SYMPTOMS INCLUDED HEMATEMESIS, VERTIGO, COUGH, DYSPHEA, RHINORRHEA, BLEARING AND CONJUNCTIVITIS, AND

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LASTED FOUR DAYS. ALL CHICKENS AND MOST PIGS
DIED, AND RICE CROP WAS 70 PER CENT DESTROYED.
SECOND ATTACK IN NEARBY PHA SAN TONG AND PHA
KONG CAUSED DEATH OF 75 OUT OF POPULATION OF
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200, WITH MOST OF SURVIVORS ILL UP TO A MONTH
AFTERWARD. THE SMOKE FROM THE ROCKET THIS
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TIME WAS GREEN AND ON THE GROUND BECAME A RICE-SIZED LIGHT BLUE PELLET WITH A BAD SMELL. SYMPTOMS WERE SIMILAR TO FIRST ATTACK BUT ALSO INCLUDED TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT BLINDNESS AND BLOODY DIARRHEA. NO ANIMALS WERE IN THE AFFECTED AREA BUT PLANTS DIED AS IN THE FIRST ATTACK.
8. INCIDENT - SEPTEMBER 1980. SOURCE CLAIMED THAT A WHITE BIPLANE PASSED OVER BAN VAN HOUAG VILLAGE (TF 35/78) AT ABOUT 7,000 FEET. IT WAS NOT OBSERVED TO HAVE DROPPED ANY CHEMICAL OR SPRAY. WITHIN THIRTY MINUTES OF ITS PASSAGE, HOWEVER, RICE-SIZED YELLOW PELLETS FELL ON THE GROUND. THEY SMELLED LIKE HOT PEPPER AND WERE

AT FIRST STICKY BUT LATER DRIED. THIRTY-FOUR PEOPLE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION OF 909 DIED WITHIN TWO WEEKS. SYMPTOMS INCLUDED HEMATEMESIS, BLOODY DIARRHEA, AND VERTIGO. ANOTHER FIFTY PEOPLE SUFFERED A TEMPORARY LOSS OF SIGHT. ALL ANIMALS DIED AS WELL AS 70 PER CENT OF RICE, LEAVES AND SHRUBS. LOCAL PATHET LAO CADRE CLAIMED ATTACK TO BE THE WORK OF "CIA/US/ VANG PAO FORCES."
9. INCIDENT - MARCH 15, 1981. SOURCE CLAIMED THAT A MULTI-ENGINE JET ABOUT THE SIZE OF A B-52 MADE A SINGLE PASS OVER BAN PU XU VILLAGE (TF 63/98), IN A VALLEY SOUTHEAST OF PU XU MOUNTAIN NEAR NAM SOM STREAM. SOURCE CLAIMED THAT THERE HAD BEEN USE OF CHEMICALS AGAINST THE VILLAGE SINCE JANUARY 1980, OFTEN EVERY TWO TO FIVE DAYS IF THERE WERE RAINS. IN THIS ATTACK, THERE WAS A BRIGHT YELLOW ASH-LIKE CHEMICAL, MOIST AT FIRST BUT THEN DRY AND FLAKY, WHICH FELL WITH A SOUND LIKE RAIN ON LEAVES BUT WHICH HAD NO SMELL. FORTY PERCENT OF POPULATION OF 1,?00 HAD A "RASH" AS A RESULT, BUT SOURCE ADMITTED 70 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION HAD ALREADY SUFFERED FROM SCABIES, SKIN INFECTIONS AND MALNUTRITION BEFORE THE ATTACK (PROVIDED REF A).
10. INCIDENTS - SOURCE CLAIMED FIVE INCIDENTS OVER THREE YEAR PERIOD AT THONG HAK (TF 85/87) COVERING FIVE VILLAGES EAST OF MT. PHOU KONG KAO, TOTAL POPULATION 5,000 IN 1978. FIRST

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INCIDENT ON FEBRUARY 2, 1978, IN WHICH B8
TYPE HELICOPTER MADE ONE PASS AT ABOUT 2,000
FEET. CHEMICAL ON GROUND WAS YELLOW AND
STICKY AND SMELLED LIKE BURNING TNT BUT DIS-
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APPEARED AFTER TWO HOURS. WITHIN AN HOUR,
VILLAGERS FELT "DRUNK" AND HAD VOMITING AND
BLOODLESS
DRRHEA. 800 DIED WITHIN TWO
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DAYS AND ANOTHER 400 WERE SICK. MANY HAD 1
CMSIZE SKIN BLISTERS. ALL PIGS AND FOWL
DIED IN CONVULSIONS WITHIN ONE HOUR, AND
LEAVES AND SMALL PLANTS TURNED YELLOW AND DRY
AND DIED WITHIN ONE WEEK. SECOND INCIDENT IN
APRIL 1978 INVOLVED A FOUR-ENGINE PROPELLER
PLANE LIKE A C-130 WHICH SPRAYED A DARK
BLUE CHEMICAL FROM UNDER ITS WINGS AT ABOUT
3,000 FEET. CHEMICAL SMELLED LIKE BURNING
PEPPER AND WAS WET AND STICKY. 500 PEOPLE
DIED WITHIN TWO DAYS AND ANOTHER 500 RE-
COVERED FROM SYMPTOMS INCLUDING DRY COUGHS,
BLOODY DIARRHEA, MUSCLE SPASMS, AND HOT NOSE
AND THROAT. ALL FOWL DIED; LEAVES HARDENED
WITHOUT LOSING COLOR THEN DROPPED. ANOTHER
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INCIDENT WAS ON JUNE 1, 1979, IN WHICH A
BIPLANE MADE A SINGLE PASS AT 2,000 FEET
CHEMICAL WAS A LIGHT REEN MIST WHICH SMELLED
OF BURNING CLOTHES. ALTHOUGH SOME 3,000 HAD
COUGHS, WATERY DIARRHEA AND ANOREMIX,-ALONG
WITH BLOODY SPUTA, ONLY FORTY DIED THANKS TO
QUICK OPIUM TREATMENT. A FEW CHICKEN AND
DOGS SURVIVED WHILE FOWL WHICH ATE THE CHEMICAL
DIED IN CONVULSIONS. NO EFFECT ON VEGETATION.
ON MARCH 1, 1981, A "RAVEN" TYPE SINGLE-ENGINE
PLANE MADE A SINGLE PASS BELOW 1,500 FEET IN
FIELDS LOCATED AT TF 82/84 A YELLOW POWDER
SMELLING OF BURNING TNT FELLWITH A SOUND LIKE
HEAVY RAIN. FIFTY DEATHS AND 100 CASES OF
ILLNESS WERE REPORTED. SYMPTOMS INCLUDED
HEADACHEBN FEVER/CHILLS AND CONVULSIONS. NO
ANIMAL DEATHS. LEAVES STIFFENED. FINAL
INCIDENT ON APRIL 5, 1981 INVOLVED A B8
HELICOPTER WHICH SPRAYED A YELLOW-BROWN
POWDER FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE AIRCRAFT FROM
ABOUT 1,500 FEET. THE POWDER REACTED WITH THE
RAIN AND HAD AN ODOR LIKE BURNING CHARCOAL.
SIXTY PEOPLE DIED IN ONE WEEK AND ANOTHER
1,000 WERE SICK WITH COUGHS, SNEEZES, CHEST
AND BACK PAINS. AFTER THREE DAYS OF COUGHING,
DARK RED-BROWN SPUTA APPEARED. AFTER ALL
FIVE INCIDENTS, LOCAL PATHET LAO/VIET CONG
OFFICIALS INTERVIEWED VILLAGERS, ALLEGEDLY
TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHEMICALS.

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11. INCIDENTS - NOVEMBER 9, 1980 AND JANUARY 5, 1981. BOTH INCIENTS TOOK PLACE AT BAN PHOUENG (RA 68/14). IN THE FIRST INCIDENT, VILLAGERS HEARD WHAT SOUNDED LIKE A LARGE FOUR ENGINE PLANE, BUT DID NOT SEE, HEAR, OR SMELL ANY CHEMICALS . TWO HOURS LATER, MANY

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PEOPLE BEGAN TO HAVE COUGHS, HEADACHE,

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VERTIGO AND A "DRUNK" FEELING AND LATER
MANY HAD BLOODY VOMITING AND DIARRHEA. WITHIN
A WEEK 12 CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OLD DIED,
AND 100 WERE SEVERELY ILL BUT RECOVERED.
FORTY PER CENT OF CHICKENS DIED. IN THE
SECOND INCIDENT, VILLAGERS SPOTTED A FOUR-
ENGINE PLANE ABOUT 7,000 FEET OVERHEAD, AND
LATER NOTED LIGHT BLUE SPOTS ON THE GROUND,
WITHOUT ANY SPECIAL SMELL OR SOUND. TWENTY
CHILDREN UNDER FIVE DIED WITHIN TWO WEEKS
AND OVER A HUNDRED MORE WERE SEVERELY ILL
WITH SYMPTOMS SIMILAR TO FIRST INCIDENT.
DIARRHEA SEEMED TO BE CAUSE OF DEATH. NEARLY
ALL ANIMALS DIED, AND LEAVES AND BUSHES DIED
WITHIN A MONTH. ABRAMOWITZ
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